

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 0293

LIMDIS

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE, EA ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OCON, XE
SUBJECT: CHIEFS OF MISSION REPORT

REF: STATE 017444

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM WAS SENT ACTION AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE,
09 JAN 1978, NOW BEING REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION.

QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 0293

LIMDIS

FOR A/SEC HOLBROOKE ONLY FROM OAKLEY

1. I SEE YOUR REPORT ON THE COM CONFERENCE AS LINKED TO YOUR
EARLIER MEMO TO THE SECRETARY, WHICH OUTLINED THE PROBLEMS
FACED BY THE U.S. IN EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC AND SERVED AS
THE BACKDROP FOR DISCUSSION IN HONG KONG. HOWEVER, THE
GENERAL LINE OF THE COM REPORT SHOULD BE OPTIMISTIC RATHER
THAN PESSIMISTIC. IT COULD START WITH THE IMPORTANCE OF
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ASIA FOR THE U.S., NOTE THE CONSENSUS THAT THE REGION AND
ITS RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. ARE PRESENTLY IN SURPRISINGLY
GOOD SHAPE (DESPITE THE VIETNAM FALLOUT), FLAG THE FEAR
THAT OUR POSITION COULD DETERIORATE MARKEDLY DUE TO NEGLECT
AND EXCESSIVE PREOCCUPATION WITH OTHER REGIONAL PROBLEMS,
AND CONCLUDE THAT WE CAN MAINTAIN AN EXCELLENT POSITION WITH
THE INVESTMENT OF RELATIVELY LIMITED RESOURCES.

ASIA DOES NOT REQUIRE ANYTHING APPROACHING THE LEVEL OF EXTRA ECONOMIC RESOURCES NEEDED BY AFRICA, THE AMOUNT OF DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY WE ARE EXPENDING IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND ON SALT, THE MILITARY ASSETS DEVOTED TO NATO, NOR THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL EFFORT DEDICATED TO SALT AND THE PANAMA CANAL. BUT IT DOES REQUIRE SOMEWHAT MORE HIGH-LEVEL ATTENTION IN ALL THESE FIELDS IF WE ARE TO AVOID SERIOUS FUTURE DAMAGE TO U.S. NATIONAL INTEREST.

2. MIKE MANSFIELD'S EXPOSITION PROVIDED AN EXCELLENT SUMMARY OF THE IMPORTANCE OF ASIA TO THE U.S.: TREMENDOUS ECONOMIC POTENTIAL DUE TO INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, TRADE, MINERAL RESOURCES AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION; MAGNITUDE OF POPULATION AND HUMANITARIAN PROBLEMS; STRATEGIC BALANCE BETWEEN U.S., USSR, PRC AND JAPAN; AND THE NEED TO MAINTAIN PEACE.

3. THE SECOND SECTION COULD NOTE BRIEFLY FAVORABLE U.S. RELATIONS WITH ASEAN, AUSTRALIA-N.Z. AND THE PACIFIC, THE ABSENCE OF SERIOUS FRICTION AND PROSPECTS FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM AND THE PRC, THE SUCCESSFUL DEFUSING OF ISSUES THAT COULD DAMAGE OUR RELATIONS WITH JAPAN (TV, NUCLEAR, TRADE), THE CONTAINMENT OF THE USSR AND THE RELATIVELY PEACEFUL COOPERATIVE RELATIONS AMONG ALL ASIAN AND PACIFIC STATES (EXCEPT INDO CHINA), AND THE PROGRESS MADE

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ON HUMAN RIGHTS.

4. THE THIRD SECTION COULD BE BASED ON YOUR MEMO TO THE SECRETARY ON PROBLEMS, HIGHLIGHTING THE ECONOMIC ISSUES (PROTECTIONIST PRESSURES ON TRADE AND INVESTMENT, SLOW PROGRESS ON COMMODITIES AND COMMON FUND LEVEL OF BILATERAL AID, MAJOR THREAT TO IFIS) AND IN THIS CONNECTION, THE PERCEPTION IN ASIA THAT OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY TENDS TO BE PUNITIVE AND TO RUN COUNTER TO POLICY OF INCREASED ASSISTANCE FOR POORER COUNTRIES. YOU COULD THEN REFER BRIEFLY TO THE NEED TO HOLD THE LINE IN INDIAN OCEAN TALKS, OBSTACLES TO PHILIPPINE BASE AGREEMENT, NEED TO MAINTAIN PRESENT MODEST LEVELS OF U.S. MILITARY STRENGTH AND ARMS TRANSFERS, AND THE DANGEROUS PERCEPTION BY REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS AND PEOPLES OF SUDDEN U.S. DISINTEREST AFTER 36 YEARS OF PRIORITY INTEREST (I.E. EVER SINCE PEARL HARBOR AND INCLUDING SEATO OF 1950S AS WELL AS VIETNAM OF 1960S). YOU MIGHT WISH TO MENTION THE DANGERS OF A PRC POLICY SHIFT IF WE WAIT TOO LONG AND THE POSSIBILITY OF A BROADER THREAT TO ASIAN PEACE ARISING FROM THE VIETNAM-CAMBODIAN CONFLICT.

5. THE FINAL SECTION COULD SUGGEST SOME SPECIFIC MEANS

OF REINFORCING OUR LONG-TERM POSITION, KEYED TO THE PROBLEMS LISTED IN THE PRECEDING SECTION AND INCLUDING THE NEED FOR HIGH-LEVEL ASIAN VISITS (AT LEAST THE VP, ANDY AND MAY STRAUSS TO THE AREA THIS YEAR; THE PRESIDENT NEXT YEAR; SUHARTO, KRIANGSAK AND FUKUDA TO THE U.S. THIS YEAR; AND THE JUNE ASEAN MINISTERIAL MEETING IN WASHINGTON WITH ROLES FOR VANCE, BLUMENTHAL AND THE PRESIDENT). THE IDEA OF A ECONOMIC SUB-CABINET TEAM VISITING ASEAN COUNTRIES IS ALSO WORTH MENTIONING.

6. SINCE ERLAND, JACK SULLIVAN AND MIKE ARMACOST WILL ALL BE INTOKYO, YOU MAY WISH TO REVIEW YOUR IDEAS OR ANYTHING YOU HAVE WRITTEN WITH THEM BEFORE THE TRIP BACK TO WASHINGTON.
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